Nova Scotia

ANNUAL REPORT

for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1987

Advisory Council on the Status of Women

89-03868/

Nova Scotia

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Advisory Council on the Status of Women

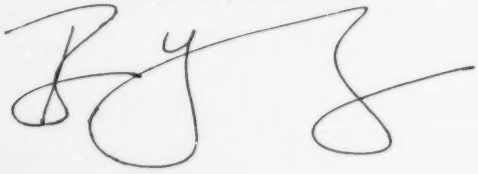
To His Honour

The Honourable Alan R. Abraham, C.D.
The Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia

Sir:

I have the honour to submit herewith the report of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1987.

Respectfully submitted,



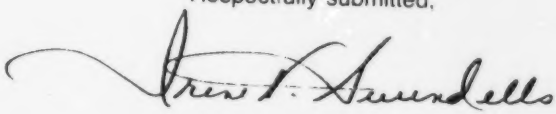
Brian Young
Minister in charge of Administration
of the Advisory Council on
the Status of Women Act

The Honourable Brian Young
Minister in charge of Administration
of the Advisory Council on the
Status of Women Act
Province of Nova Scotia
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Sir:

I have the privilege on behalf of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women to present our report on the work of the Council for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1987.

Respectfully submitted,



Irene Swindells
Chairperson

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COUNCIL'S MANDATE

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women is a group of people appointed by Cabinet. Its membership includes an elected chairperson, vice-chairperson and an appointed full-time president. The Council meets five times a year, with provision for up to two special meetings if required. Three standing committees—Legislative, Program and Personnel—meet and make recommendations to the Council.

The Mandate of the Council is twofold:

1) to advise the Minister upon such matters relating to the status of women as referred to the Council for consideration by the Minister, and
2) to bring to the attention of the Minister matters of interest and concern to women.

The Council in carrying out its duties may:

- receive and hear petitions and suggestions concerning the status of women
- undertake and recommend research on matters relevant to the status of women
- recommend and participate in programs concerning the status of women
- propose legislation, policies and practices to promote equality of opportunity and status
- publish reports, studies and recommendations.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the following report as the Chairperson of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for 1986.

The past year, and the latter half of 1986 in particular, was a very busy period for the Council with many positive changes and developments taking place, and others in the works.

We were successful in having Gudrun Agnarsdottir, M.P., from Iceland. We shared this occasion with Mount Saint Vincent, and an evening lecture given by the M.P. was open to the public. Each of us came away with an even stronger commitment to the advancement of women and fresh ways to attain that goal.

The Council's efforts to communicate the concerns of women in Nova Scotia to government have been reasonably successful, judging from the contents of the *Report of the Task Force on Family and Children's Services*, and references in the Speech From The Throne opening the Third Session of the Fifty-Fourth General Assembly to a number of areas of concern that have been pressed by the Council.

Strong lines of communication have been established between the Council and the ministerial level of government, and I believe this has yielded important results in our efforts to see the concerns of women reflected in public policy.

Badly needed additions to the Council's support services and staff were also made recently with the appointment of a full time researcher, a new coordinator, and a sixth field worker.

Field workers are the Council's front line troops—informing women in rural communities around the province of the programs and services available to women, and in turn, bringing the concerns of Nova Scotia women back to the council, and on to government. This direct communication with women at the community level throughout the province makes the Field Work Program one of the most important aspects of the Council's work.

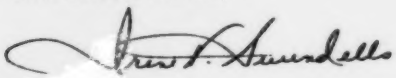
The Council's ability to better service and respond to the needs of women in Nova Scotia will be further augmented when the Council's headquarters is relocated to the new Purdy's Wharf office tower on the Halifax waterfront. The new office space will allow the Council to establish a resource centre at headquarters, and will also include the welcome addition of a boardroom large enough to hold major meetings.

Important committee work was undertaken by Council members throughout the year. Council committees dealt with a broad range of issues such as: women in conflict with the law; Bills before Parliament, such as the Employment Equity Bill, changes to the Child Benefits System, and pension reform legislation; housing needs of transient women; the Council's relationship and role with respect to the Women's Directorate, proposed by the Premier at the 1985 First Ministers Conference; women in business; internal administrative priorities; identification and allocation of resources; plans for making the Council's 10th anniversary in September 1987.

As well we were fortunate to have the Honourable Barbara McDougall visit Nova Scotia and meet with the Ad Hoc Women's Group presidents and/or chairpersons. This was a great success and allowed each representative to speak directly to the national minister.

I thank Council members and staff for their cooperation, and for the many hours of dedicated service they have put in over the past year. We can all be proud of the results. I have been honoured to have the opportunity to serve as chairperson and participate in the important work of the Council. It has been an enriching and rewarding experience for me.

With sincere thanks,



Irene Swindells

GROUPS CONTACTED BY THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Harold Barrett Junior High School—Grades 8 and 9
- Mother's Union, Emmanuel Anglican Church—workshop on pornography
- Windsor Progressive Conservative Association
- Registered Nurses Association—pornography
- Sackville Senior High School—sex-role stereotyping
- Cape Breton/East Richmond Progressive Conservative Women
- Elizabeth Fry Association
- Adsum House
- Juniper House
- Chrysalis House
- Cape Breton Transition House
- Committee on Family Violence, Department of Social Services
- Joint Human Rights/Education Committee
- Human Resources Committee.

BRIEFS PRODUCED

The following two briefs were produced by the Advisory Council during 1986/87:

- *A Response to the Task Force on Family and Children's Services*
- *Brief to the Parliamentary Committee on Child Care.*

Briefs were presented to:

- Minister of Housing
- Task Force on Family and Children's Services
- Parliamentary Committee on Child Care.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Legislative Committee Report

Members of the Committee:
Monica M. Kennedy, Chairperson Legislative Committee
Irene Swindells, Chairperson
Pauline d'Entremont
Myrna Slater
Irene MacIsaac
Margaret Shears

The Legislative Committee continued to monitor the Elizabeth Fry Society's concerns regarding women in conflict with the law. The Committee recommended that the President be directed to correspond with the Department of the Attorney General regarding issues raised by the Society and continue to keep an open line of communication with the Society.

The Legislative Committee reviewed the proposed legislation for C-62, the Employment Equity Bill, and recommended the President be directed to write the Minister of Employment and Immigration, pointing out Council's concerns about weaknesses in the legislation related to enforcement.

Concerning Bill C-70, Changes to the Child Benefits System (namely de-indexation of Family Allowances), the Legislative Committee recommended the President be directed to write the Minister of Finance and express Council's opinion that de-indexation would be harmful in the long run to low-income families in Canada.

On the recommendation of the Legislative Committee, Sister Virginia Turner of Adsum House was invited to the March meeting of the Council to discuss the housing needs of transient women.

As a result of a request from the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, the Legislative Chairperson, in conjunction with the Program Chairperson, undertook a study of Council's present structure, meetings schedule and members' roles. The paper was presented to the Minister on behalf of the Council. The Legislative Chairperson is now in the process of reviewing the rules and regulations governing Council activity to effect the changes recommended in the paper.

Also, complying with the Minister's request, the Legislative Chairperson sent the Minister an outline of Council's relationship and role with regard to the Women's Directorate proposed by Premier Buchanan at the 1985 First Minister's Conference.

The Legislative Chairperson developed a poliicy that recommends guidelines to Council for (a) writing briefs, (b) commissioning research and (c) hearing public briefs.

The Legislative Committee began reviewing the contract form used by Council for the purpose of commissioning research work.

The Legislative Commmittee began to study Bill No. 122, pension reform legislation, and received funding to research the legislation, particularly its effects on the women of Nova Scotia.

The Chairperson of the Legislative Committee attended the first annual Conference of the Atlantic Women Business Owners in April which focussed on female entrepreneurship in the Atlantic Region. A report was subsequently circulated to Council members and a recommendation made that Council continue to monitor the activities of this group.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica M. Kennedy
Chairperson

Program Committee Report

Members
Agnes Sullivan, Chairperson
Irene Swindells
Dorothy Emmett
Donna Lassaline
Myrna Slater

The main purpose of this committee is to set the goals of the Council for the year. With this in mind, at the first meeting of 1986/87 we discussed the following items:

- Regional meetings
- Nova Scotia Pension Act
- Resource File
- 10th Anniversary.

Regional Meetings

The Council holds up to five such meetings each year. The purpose of these meetings is to meet with the women of the area to find out their concerns and needs. Results of these meetings are then presented to Council members and positive action should follow to erase or alleviate these concerns or needs.

This year three regional meetings were planned. The first was held in the Cape Breton Industrial area, Deccember 9, 1986 in New Waterford. The second was scheduled for the Hants area followed by one in the Cumberland area. We felt an alternate area was necessary in case one of the above did not materialize. The Acadian area will serve as an alternate area.

Nova Scotia Pension Act

As a committee we recognized the importance of the Nova Scotia Pension Act. An expert in pensions has been invited to speak to the Council. The expert is expected to pinpoint areas where the Act could be improved to ensure that women in their later years will not be burdened with financial concerns.

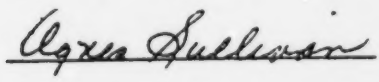
Resource file

This project is continued from the previous year. We realize the importance of having at our fingertips a list of competent women willing to be called upon to address women's groups in their area of expertise. The Council has learned that such a list is now being compiled. If this resource file will be available to us we see no point in duplication.

10th Anniversary

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women will celebrate its 10th Anniversary September 13, 1987. The program committee felt it important to mark this anniversary in a special way. The topic was presented to Council and discussed. The Council is now in the process of drawing up plans for the 10th Anniversary.

Respectfully submitted,



Agnes Sullivan
Chairperson

Personnel Committee Report

Members
Dorothy Emmett, Chairperson
Linda Carvery
Linda Oliver
Sheri Gaetz

The Chairperson helped screen applicants and assisted in the interviews for the position of Co-Ordinator of Regional Services. Hiring for this position has not been finalized.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy M. Emmett

Dorothy Emmett
Chairperson

FINANCIAL REPORT

1985—1986 Actual Expenditures		**$200,563**
Salaries and Wages	$134,062	
Travel	$ 26,182	
Professional and Special Services	$ 17,855	
Supplies and Services	$ 15,428	
Other	$ 7,036	
1986—1987 Estimated Budget		**$260,000**
Salaries and Wages	$156,490	
Travel	$ 47,240	
Professional and Special Services	$ 21,970	
Supplies and Services	$ 25,800	
Other	$ 8,500	